PLUS PROGRAM · ALIGNMENT GUIDE · TITLE IV, PART A

PLUS ALIGNMENT GUIDE

ESSA TITLE IV, PART A STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

SIDE-BY-SIDE LANGUAGE FOR GRANT WRITERS. ADAPT EVERY BRACKET TO YOUR SCHOOL.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Title IV, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) program. It is a federal formula grant, so there is no competition to win. In California, an LEA is eligible if it received Title I, Part A funds in the prior year. It applies through the Consolidated Application and Reporting System (CARS), and its plan for the funds is the LCAP Federal Addendum. The program has three purposes: a well-rounded education, safe and healthy students, and effective use of technology. As of October 31, 2026, CDE lists $158,614,575 statewide for 2026-27. An LEA that receives $30,000 or more must complete a needs assessment once every three years. Confirm your allocation and current CARS dates with your federal programs office.

This guide follows the parts of the statute that shape your plan: the needs assessment, consultation, the three allowable use sections (4107, 4108 and 4109), program objectives and evaluation, and the fiscal rules. PLUS fits Section 4108, safe and healthy students. Each table shows what Title IV, Part A asks for, where PLUS fits, and sample language you can adapt for your Federal Addendum or spending plan. The sample language uses brackets for the details only your district can supply. Replace every bracket with your own data and rewrite the language in your district's voice.

> **Writer's note.** Use the rows that fit your district. Reviewers at CDE and your own federal programs office read this plan for compliance and coherence. They want to see the needs assessment drive the spending and each activity sit under the right section. Keep PLUS under Section 4108 unless a row below clearly fits your plan.
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> **Writer's note on federal funding.** Title IV, Part A is funded for the 2026-27 school year. The President's 2027 budget request proposes $0 for the program and folds it into a new single state formula grant. The House Appropriations Committee rejected that consolidation in June 2026, the Senate has not acted, and a temporary funding bill runs through December 11, 2026. If your district's Title IV, Part A allocation changes, the same language fits a Title I schoolwide plan or an LCAP action.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT (ESSA SECTION 4106(D))

The needs assessment examines three areas: access to a well-rounded education, school conditions for a healthy and safe learning environment, and access to personalized learning supported by technology.

TITLE IV, PART A ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Indicators for school conditions for a healthy and safe environment	Direction measures experiences such as being bullied, left out or seeing a fight in the last 30 days. A question asked across schools to more than 250 students sets a norm, and a school above it gets a warning indicator. Results can be viewed by grade level and student group.	*"The district used Direction as a main tool for the safe and healthy students area. Each secondary school surveyed a representative sample of less than 10 percent of students. [Three] high schools were above the [6] percent norm for students bullied on campus in the last 30 days."*
Input from families	Direction runs parent surveys by QR code.	*"A Direction parent survey found that [28] percent of parents reported their child had a problem with other students this year."*
A gap that justifies the activity	Many districts have PBIS and MTSS teams that review behavior data without current information from students. The California Healthy Kids Survey is given every other year.	*"Educational partners said our PBIS and MTSS teams lack current information from students about what happens between them. They asked for a monthly measure of climate and a real role for students in the response."*

CONSULTATION (ESSA SECTION 4106(C))

The plan must be developed in consultation with parents, teachers, principals, other school leaders, students, community-based organizations, local government representatives and, where applicable, Indian tribes.

TITLE IV, PART A ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Student consultation	PLUS cycle reports give the district documented student input nine times a year. PLUS students can present findings to the LCAP educational partners committee.	*"PLUS students at [School] will present cycle findings to the LCAP educational partners committee each [spring] as part of Title IV, Part A consultation."*
Ongoing consultation	The district Direction report shows results across sites and trends over time.	*"The district will share the Direction district report with educational partners each year so consultation draws on current student data."*

Writer's note. If the district provides equitable services, private school officials must also be part of consultation. That obligation belongs to the district and does not change with PLUS.

SAFE AND HEALTHY STUDENTS (ESSA SECTION 4108)

This is the main fit. Section 4108 lists activities an LEA may fund to support safe, healthy, supportive and drug-free environments.

TITLE IV, PART A ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Drug and violence prevention (Section 4108(5)(A))	The 30-day cycle measures and responds to risk factors such as fights and vaping. Direction includes vaping questions. Its activity database includes vaping activities, such as a feeder school vaping talk delivered by older PLUS students. Section 4108(5)(A) asks for evidence-based programs. Describe the evidence accurately: PLUS meets ESSA Tier 2 for improving attendance, and its published studies on bullying and school climate are separate.	*"PLUS Teams will track vaping and fights in Direction each cycle and lead schoolwide activities that respond to what the data shows, including a feeder school vaping talk for [middle school] students."*
Bullying and harassment prevention (Section 4108(5)(C))	Forums focus on interactions between students on campus: bullying, harassment, exclusion and isolation. Direction tracks bullying against a norm. A 2022 study in the Journal of Prevention and Health Promotion examined PLUS for bullying prevention inside schoolwide PBIS.	*"Each month the PLUS Team will facilitate a Forum with a new group of students. The Forum will name the top four critical issues between students, and the Team will plan a schoolwide response."*
Relationship-building skills, such as effective communication (Section 4108(5)(C))	PLUS students practice facilitation, listening and presenting findings to adults. Youth development activities during the school day build connection and belonging.	*"Students in the PLUS class will practice communication and facilitation as they lead Forums and present findings to site teams each cycle."*

TITLE IV, PART A ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Training for school personnel in school-based violence prevention and bullying prevention (Section 4108(5)(D))	The PLUS staff team (administrator, counselor or PBIS lead, Advisor) attends the 2-Day PLUS Program Development Training. The Advisor attends the PLUS Advisor Institute.	*"Title IV, Part A funds will support the 2-Day PLUS Program Development Training for a staff team at each of [number] schools and the PLUS Advisor Institute for each Advisor."*
Schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports (Section 4108(5)(G))	PLUS gives the PBIS team monthly student data to explain changes in behavior data. The Advisor serves on the PBIS team.	*"The PLUS Advisor will bring each cycle report to [School]'s PBIS team, which will use student data alongside office referral data to adjust Tier 1 supports."*
School-based mental health services (Section 4108(5)(B))	PLUS does not fit here. Section 4108 requires these services to come from licensed or certified professionals. The PLUS Team can serve as a liaison that promotes the wellness center and reduces stigma. Students do not counsel or mediate their peers.	*"Mental health services are provided by [district counselors and partner agency]. The PLUS Team will promote the wellness center each semester with QR code campaigns that link to its self-referral form."*

WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION (ESSA SECTION 4107)

CDE's examples for this section include civics and volunteerism. PLUS fits here only in a limited way, through the civic engagement work of the PLUS class.

TITLE IV, PART A ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Civics and government education	The PLUS curriculum aligns with the California State Seal of Civic Engagement. Students research conditions on their own campus and present findings to adults. Hemet Unified PLUS students presented to the Hemet City Council in 2014 and 2015, and the city banned tobacco in its parks in March 2015.	*"The PLUS class gives students a year-long experience of civic engagement on their own campus. The curriculum aligns with the State Seal of Civic Engagement."*
Volunteerism and community involvement	PLUS Teams carry out activities with the whole campus each cycle and can host evening Forums for families.	*"PLUS students will lead campus activities each cycle and co-host an evening family Forum with [family partner] each semester."*

Writer's note. Do not move PLUS costs into Section 4107 to meet the 20 percent minimum for well-rounded education. Charge each cost to one section only. Most districts describe the civic engagement value of PLUS here and charge its costs under Section 4108.

EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY (ESSA SECTION 4109)

PLUS does not fit this section. Section 4109 supports personalized learning, digital literacy and professional learning on using technology in instruction. Direction is a data platform for school climate, so its cost belongs under Section 4108 with the rest of PLUS. Leave PLUS out of your technology narrative.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION (ESSA SECTION 4106(E)(1)(E))

The Federal Addendum asks for program objectives, intended outcomes and how the LEA will evaluate them over time.

TITLE IV, PART A ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Objectives drawn from the needs assessment	Direction supplies monthly measures. Cycle reports document implementation. Discipline data and the California Healthy Kids Survey add annual and biennial measures. Do not use academic or reading outcomes.	*"By spring [2030], the share of sampled students in grades 9 to 12 reporting being bullied on campus in the last 30 days will fall from [9] percent to at or below the [6] percent norm."*
Periodic evaluation	The district Direction report shows results across sites by grade level and student group, with trends over time and a report for the board.	*"The [Director of Student Support Services] will present an annual Title IV, Part A review to the LCAP committee and the board. It will include the district Direction report and the year's cycle reports, and it will shape the next year's spending plan."*

DISTRIBUTION AND FISCAL RULES

These rules come from Sections 4001(b), 4106(e)(2), 4109 and 4110 and from CDE's program guidance.

TITLE IV, PART A ASKS FOR	WHERE PLUS FITS	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
At least 20 percent for safe and healthy students (LEAs receiving $30,000 or more)	PLUS costs count toward this minimum.	*"PLUS Districtwide and Direction account for [$52,945], or [31] percent, of the district's Year 1 allocation under safe and healthy students."*
Priority for schools with the greatest needs	Direction district alerts and student group results show which schools need the work most.	*"The district will start PLUS at the [three] schools above the Direction bullying norm, all of which are Title I schools."*
Supplement, not supplant (Section 4110)	Charge only new costs to Title IV, Part A, such as subscriptions, training and new collaboration time for the Advisor.	*"Title IV, Part A will fund only new PLUS costs. The PLUS class section remains funded from [LCFF], as other elective sections are."*
No medical services or drug treatment	PLUS provides neither.	*No language needed.*

BUDGET LANGUAGE

LINE	SAMPLE BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
PLUS Advisor, 0.1 to 0.2 FTE	"Funds [0.1] FTE of new collaboration time for each PLUS Advisor. 0.1 FTE can get the job done. 0.2 FTE is recommended because the extra 0.1 FTE lets the Advisor collaborate on the PBIS, MTSS and school safety teams. The class section itself is funded from [LCFF]."
PLUS Program, first year ($3,495 per site)	"Funds the 2-Day PLUS Program Development Training for a staff team of up to four, the online subscription with unlimited Direction and the activity resource database, the PLUS curriculum and one conference registration."
PLUS Program, each year after ($1,495 per site with a three-year agreement)	"Continues the subscription, one conference registration and one 2-Day training registration for a new staff member each year."
PLUS Advisor Institute ($1,495 registration plus lodging and travel)	"Prepares each PLUS Advisor to teach the PLUS class and lead its activities through the year."

Writer's note. Before you charge any PLUS cost to Title IV, Part A, ask whether the district would pay for it from state or local funds anyway. If it would, the charge is a supplanting risk. Show each year's distribution so CDE can see the 20 percent minimums are met as PLUS costs change. No more than 15 percent of funds under Section 4109 may buy technology infrastructure, which does not affect PLUS. Check how your district counts equitable services and administrative costs before you finalize percentages.

Writer's note. The full sample plan for a fictional district, Silver Pines Unified School District, on the Funding PLUS page shows these pieces assembled into a Federal Addendum section and spending plan. Confirm prices at plusprogram.org/costs before you finalize the budget.

SOURCES

- CDE: Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment program page
- CDE: Title IV, Part A LEA allocations
- CDE: Funding Profile, Title IV, Part A, 2026-27
- 20 U.S.C. 7116, local educational agency applications (ESSA Section 4106)
- 20 U.S.C. 7118, activities to support safe and healthy students (ESSA Section 4108)
- 20 U.S.C. 7120, supplement, not supplant (ESSA Section 4110)
- PLUS Program Costs